A

SERIOUS ADDRESS

TO

CHILDREN;

AND A

HYMN.

To which is added,

A SERMON, AND HYMN,

BY A LADY.

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A

SERIOUS ADDRESS

TO

CHILDREN.

Dear Children,

YOU have heard of Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, who came down from heaven to ſave ſinners. And perhaps you have heard that, great and glorious as he was, he was ſo kind, and ſo humble, as to notice ſuch children as you are. And when his diſciples were ſending them away for fear they ſhould be troubleſome, Jeſus ſaid, *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.* And he took them in his arms, and bleſſed them.

He called ſuch little ones as you are, his Lambs; and he has commanded his miniſters, if they love him, to feed his lambs: that is, to teach and inſtruct them, in a way ſuited to their tender years; to feed them with the ſincere milk of his word, that they may grow thereby.

When we conſider that you have ſouls, immortal ſouls, that muſt either be happy

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for ever in heaven, or for ever miſerable in hell, we are moved with compaſſion towards you; we are ready to ſay, Shall theſe dear children, the lambs of Chriſt's flock, whom he ſo tenderly loves, and for whom he died, ſhall they periſh for ever? Inſtead of being brought up for God and heaven, ſhall they be brought up for the devil and his kingdom? Shall their infant-tongues be taught the language of hell, inſtead of the praiſes of their God? Dreadful thought!

You were ſent into this world to know God, and to ſerve him here on earth, that you may dwell with him, and be happy for ever in heaven; and is it not ſad that you ſhould be ignorant of the God that made you, ignorant of the Saviour that came to redeem you, ignorant of your own ſouls, and of that world in which you are to live for ever?

You have been taught, perhaps, to ſay, Our Father which art in heaven: But have you ever been taught, who this heavenly Father is? and what he has done for you; and how you muſt become one of his children?

Remember he is not the father of liars, or ſwearers, or ſabbath-breakers: If you do theſe things, you muſt not call God your Father. It is the devil who is the

father of liars; and if you are like him in wicked works, you muſt live for ever with him in hell.

But, children, we hope better things of you. Do you not deſire to be the children of God, to have him for your Father and Friend? To know him, and to love him? Then let me tell you what God is; and will it not rejoice your little hearts to hear it?

God is Love.

It is God that gives you every good thing that you enjoy; it is his ſun that ſhines to warm and comfort you; it is his corn that feeds you, and his flax and wool that clothes you. Have you parents to provide for you; or, if they are poor, have you friends to help you? it is God that gives them to you; and will you not love him for all his goodneſs to you? And we can tell you with joy, that God has done ſtill greater things than theſe for you; he has given his dear, his well-beloved Son, to redeem and ſave you.

Jeſus died the cruel death of the croſs, that you might be ſaved from everlaſting death; and he roſe from the dead, that you might alſo riſe from the dead, and live with him for ever in heaven.

And has God ſo loved the world, has he ſo loved you, as to give his only begotten Son to die for you, and will you not love him? You ſee he is not willing that any ſhould periſh. Like as a father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pities you.

He pities you, when he ſees that all his mercies do not make you love him: He pities you, when he ſees that you love ſin more than holineſs: He pities you, when he ſees that you will not come to Jeſus for pardon, life, and ſalvation: He pities you, when he ſees you going with ſinners in the broad road to deſtruction: And he ſays, with love and compaſſion, *Why will ye die? Come unto me, and be ſaved? I would gather you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye will not.*

Does the bleſſed God thus love and pity you, and will you not love him? He is pleaſed to hear your infant-tongues employed in his praiſe, he loves to hear you pray to him, and call him Father, and will you not be his dutiful and obedient children?

The firſt and great commandment, you know, is to love the Lord your God with all your heart; and ſurely you do not think it a hard commandment to love this God, who loves, and is ſo good to you. Is it not reaſonable that you ſhould love

him above all things, who is your beſt Friend, and can do more for you than all the world? Are you ſick? He can heal all your diſeaſes: Are you poor, and in want? He can ſatisfy you with bread for your body, and with the bread of life for your ſouls. Go, children, with all your wants to this compaſſionate Father. He that heareth the young ravens when they cry, will ſurely hear you when you cry unto him. Say unto him in prayer,

MY heavenly Father, I would love thee, not only becauſe thou haſt commanded me, but becauſe it is my happineſs, my pleaſure, to love thee. Whom is there in heaven, or on earth, that I ſhould love ſo well as thee? My parents do much for me, and I love them, and thank thee for them: But thou, my heavenly Father, canſt do much more; thou canſt heal all my diſeaſes, and forgive all my ſins; thou canſt make me holy and happy here, and take me to dwell with thee for ever in heaven. And ſhall I not love thee above all? And, O my heavenly Father! if I love thee, ſurely I ſhall obey thee in all things. I would be thy dutiful, as well as thy loving child. Whatſoever thou commandeſt, that would I do; whatſoever thou forbiddeſt, that

would I avoid. Make me like thyſelf in holineſs and goodneſs here, that I may be fit to dwell with thee, and be happy for ever in heaven, for the ſake of my dear Redeemer.

AMEN.

A

HYMN.

OUR heavenly Father calls us near,
And bids us ſeek his face;
Our cheerful hearts with joy reply,
We'll ſeek our Father's face.

He loves to hear our infant-tongues
His power and grace proclaim;
In ſweet hoſannas let us join
To praiſe our Maker's name.

Our food, our clothes, and all we have,
Are giv'n us from above;
And every bleſſing we receive
Is from the God of Love.

'Twas love that ſent a Saviour down,
To die for ſinful men;
'Twas love that rais'd him from the grave,
That we might riſe again.

'Tis love that bids us ſhun the place
Where none but ſinners dwell,
And warns us from the crooked road
That leads to death and hell.

'Tis love that guides our wand'ring feet,
To walk the ſacred road,
And keeps us in the way that leads
To happineſs and God.

Then let our cheerful praiſes join
The heav'nly hoſt above;
And all in heav'n and earth unite
To praiſe the God of Love.

A

SERMON,

BY A

LADY.

MATTHEW, Chap. vi. Verſe 6.

When thou prayeſt, enter into thy cloſet, and when thou haſt ſhut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in ſecret; and thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret ſhall reward thee openly.

DO you, children, love God above all things? is he your Father, your heavenly Father? then ſurely, it muſt be your higheſt pleaſure to pray to him; you have much to ſay to him, much to aſk of him, and much to thank him for.

Go, children, if poſſible, where none can ſee you but God, your heavenly Father, and there pour out your hearts before him, with all the duty and affection of a child: tell him how much you love him for all his goodneſs to you; that you had rather have his favour, the light of his countenance, than all the good things that this world can give you.

You may tell him how grieved you are, that your giddy hearts are ſo apt to forget him amidſt the follies and vanities of childhood and youth; that you ſo often pray

to him without that reverence, love, and affection, which you ought ever to feel for him; that you ſo often read his holy word with careleſſneſs and indifference, as if it were the word of man, and not the word of God, and that you are not made holier and better by it.

You may lament over the pride, obſtinacy, and perverſeneſs, that you ſometimes feel in your hearts, and that you ſtrive ſo little againſt theſe ſins, that you may conquer and overcome them.

Thus may you humble yourſelves before God, for all your ſins and follies; and beg, that, for Chriſt's ſake, he would forgive them all, and grant you the aſſiſtance of his good Spirit, to help you to love him more, and ſerve him better.

It is good, children, to draw near to God, to ſhow forth his loving kindneſs in the morning, and his faithfulneſs every night. Begin every day with this delightful ſervice. You cannot ſurely awake in the morning to health, to friends, to every bleſſing of life, without thanking the God of your mercies, who giveth you all things richly to enjoy.

Dare not venture into the dangers and temptations of the day, without praying that God would be with you, to keep you from ſin, and deliver you from evil. Nor can you ſurely lie down in peace at night,

without thanking the kind hand that has kept you from evil, and crowned the day with his loving kindneſs and tender mercies, without aſking forgiveneſs of your heavenly Father for all that you have done amiſs. Thus may you commit yourſelves to his care, through the dangers of the night; for it is God only who can make you to dwell in ſafety.

Thus, children, you may converſe in ſecret with your heavenly Father; and be aſſured, he who heareth the young ravens when they cry, will hear you when you pray unto him: he ſees in ſecret the feebleſt wiſh of your heart to love and ſerve him: he will remember the kindneſs of your youth, and will reward you openly. Fear not, children, though you ſhould have only a dark corner to pray in, your heavenly Father ſees you there: fear not, though your companions ſhould laugh at you for being ſo preciſe about your prayers; remember whom you are to fear: fear him who can kill both ſoul and body in hell.

Your heavenly Father ſees when you are aſhamed or afraid to pray to him. Jeſus has ſaid, He who is aſhamed of me, of him will I be aſhamed before my Father and his holy angels; but he who confeſſeth me before men, him will I confeſs before my Father and his holy angels.

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Believe it, children, you will never pray to him in vain: he will reward you in this world with every thing that he ſees beſt for you; and, at the laſt day, he will reward you openly before men and angels.

A HYMN.

COME, children, learn this kind command,
To love the Lord your God;
Love him with all your heart and mind,
And ſpread his praiſe abroad.
'Twas his kind hand your being gave,
And form'd you of the ground,
And 'tis the ſame Almighty hand
That fills creation round.
Soon as your infant-years began,
Your life was crown'd with love;
And every bleſſing you receive,
Is giv'n you from above.
Let your firſt thoughts by morning-light,
Aſcend to God on high,
And in the evening raiſe your thoughts
Above the ſtarry ſky.
He loves to hear your infant-cries,
He bids you ſeek his face;
Go, like the children of his love,
And aſk his promis'd grace.
To him let your firſt vows be paid,
He merits all your love;
Tell him there's none you love like God,
In earth, or heaven above.

FINIS.